

REMARKS

I. Status of Application

By the present Amendment, claim 27 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-26 and 28-29 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-29 have been rejected.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Without conceding to the merits of the Examiner's rejections, claim 27 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer thereby rendering the Examiner's rejection moot.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-6, 15-23 and 25-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue et al (US 6,354,688 in view of Wada et al (US 6,270,178). Claims 7 and 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Wada, as applied to claim 3 above, and in view of Otsuki (US 2002/0175962). Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Wada and further in view of Otsuki, as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Arima et al (US 6,692,097). Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Wada, Otsuki Arima. Applicant respectfully traverses all of these rejections.

As an initial matter, Applicant notes that claim 27 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and, therefore, the Examiner's rejections regarding claim 27 are now moot.

Moreover, without conceding to the merits of the Examiner's rejections, claim 1 has been amended, as set forth above, to recite (among other things):

...printing a correction pattern by ejecting ink from a plurality of nozzles... and forming... a plurality of lines... a first one of the plurality of lines formed with a first one of the plurality of nozzles being adjacent to a second one of the plurality of lines formed with a second one of the plurality of nozzles;

obtaining correction values that respectively correspond to the lines by measuring a darkness of the correction pattern line by line;

storing the correction values for the lines, respectively...

The cited references, and any combination thereof, fail to teach or suggest all the recitations of claim 1 and, therefore, claim 1 is patentable for *at least* these reasons.

According to claim 1, correction values that respectively correspond to the lines are obtained, and the correction values for the lines are respectively stored. The Examiner acknowledges that Inoue fails to teach or suggest these features, but alleges that Wada remedies the deficient teachings of Inoue. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

In sharp contrast to claim 1, in Wada, the density of each line corresponds to each nozzle, and the density of each line is converted into an amount of ink discharged in a single discharge operation of the nozzle (Wada, column 18, lines 38-42). For example, according to Wada, in a case where Nozzle #1 is used to form line #1 and line #100 during print operation, the same correction for Nozzle #1 is made for correcting both line #1 and line #100.

On the other hand, according to illustrative embodiments consistent with claim 1, even in the case where Nozzle #1 is used to form line #1 and line #100 during print operation, a first correction value that corresponds to line #1 is used for correcting line #1, and a second correction value that corresponds to line #100 is used for correcting line #100. Thus, consistent with illustrative embodiments of claim 1, the correction value that corresponds to line #1 and the correction value that corresponds to line #100 may be different from each other.

As a result, exemplary embodiments according to claim 1 achieve numerous nonobvious advantages over the cited references. For example, turning back to the above example, since a darkness of line #1 (in the case where line #1 is formed with Nozzle #1) is different from a darkness of line #100 (in the case where line #100 is formed with Nozzle #1), due to the state of the paper, e.g., the extent of bending of the paper, the darkness is more precisely corrected by exemplary embodiments according to claim 1 than the cited references.

Therefore, *at least* in view of the above described distinctions, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over Inoue, Wada, and any combination thereof. Further, the dependent claims 2-23 and 28-29 are patentable *at least* by virtue of their dependency. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw these rejections.

In view of the similarity between the requirements of claims 24-26 and the requirements discussed above with respect to independent claim 1, Applicant respectfully submits that arguments analogous to the foregoing arguments as to the patentability of independent claim 1 demonstrate the patentability of claims 24-26. As such, it is respectfully submitted that claims 24-26 are patentably distinguishable over the cited references *at least* for reasons analogous to

those presented above. Thus, the allowance of these claims is respectfully solicited of the Examiner.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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